modernisation is a relative term. There are not even any sitting facilities at Silchar airport and he is replying "No" to whether the passengers had been put to any inconvenience. I am astonished to hear this reply. Passengers have been put to a lot of inconvenience, and when we ask this question, we are told it does not belong to Civil Aviation and that Silchar airport belongs to Defence. I do not know whom it belongs to. Sir, you kindly have to find out and get us the proper answer and protect us. I want this information from the hon. Minister. Will the hon. Minister enquire from the Station Manager and the passengers from that station without relying on other reports in future so that Members are not misled?

SHRI MOTI LAL VORA: I may inform the hon. Member that facilities provided so far include hotel accommodation...

MR. CHAIRMAN: The specific question is about Silchar about which the answer sometime given is that that this airport belongs to civil authorities, and sometime it is said that it belongs to Defence authorities. You may find out and see what can be done to help the people of Silchar.

SHRI MOTI LAL VORA: I will find out.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question.

Increase in AIDS cases

*23. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY:†
SHRI D. B. CHANDRE GOWDA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether according to World Health Organisation figures as quoted in the 'Indian Express' of December 13, 1987, 1.5 lakh cases of AIDS have been reported during the year 1987;

(b) whether the number of AIDS cases are increasing in India day by day; and

(c) what steps the Government propose to take to bring about awareness against AIDS amongst the people?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

The Government has seen the news item in the 'Indian Express' dated 13th December, 1987.

According to the estimates made by the World Health Organisation, the number of officially reported AIDS cases as on 1.1.1988 were 73,747. However, since all cases are not reported, the WHO has estimated the total number of AIDS cases all over the World to be approximately 1.5 lakhs.

Based on the country-wide surveillance and screening of persons belonging to high risk groups namely, foreigners including foreign students, sexually transmitted disease patients, prostitutes and intravenous drug abusers, the cumulative number of full blown AIDS cases detected in India as on 1.1.1987 were 6 and as on 1.1.88 was 15. Out of 15 full blown cases of AIDS in India, 8 were Indians, 6 were foreigners and 1 a non-resident Indian. It would thus be seen that the number of AIDS cases in India is small and the evidence suggest that the 8 Indians who succumbed to the disease contacted the infection during their stay abroad.

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri V. Narayanasamy.

The line of action being pursued at present is prevention through public education coupled with effective surveillance. The Government proposes to intensify public education through mass media and expansion of surveillance activities and training of workers to build up capabilities for detection, diagnosis and treatment of AIDS cases.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, the hon. Minister will agree that AIDS is a dreaded disease shaking the entire nation today, but the reply given by the hon. Minister is so light. It says that as on 1-1-87, there were only six cases detected and as on 1-1-1988, the number of cases detected was 15. Out of this, 8 were full-blown cases. But the ICMR has given the number of persons affected by AIDS as 145 throughout the country. I would like to know which version is correct. I would also like to know how many AIDS detection centres have been opened in the country and whether the target of opening 125 AIDS detection centres has been achieved.

KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE: The hon. Member said that my answer is not correct. I would like to say humbly that upto 31st January 1988, as many as 79,729 persons amongst the high-risk group have been screened in different parts of the country out of which 222 were found to have AIDS infection as confirmed by the blood tests. I would give the break-up of the 8 full-blown cases State-wise: Two cases were found in Maharashtra; one in Andhra Pradesh; two in Punjab; one in Jammu and Kashmir; one in Gujarat and one case in Uttar Pradesh. About 222 cases about which I mentioned, they were not suffering from the same disease. Only fifteen cases are found in our country. Out of these fifteen, eight were full blown cases of AIDS, AIDS-affected but without clinical manifestation, out of 222.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, the hon. Minister has not answered the second part of my question. I wanted to know how many centres have been opened. How many centres have been opened in the urban and rural areas?

KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE: We have 37 centres in the country for this. We call them surveillance centres.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: My second supplementary is, whether any vaccine has been developed in our country and is there any collaboration arrangement with any other country for the purpose of curing AIDS? Part (b) of my question is, whether the Government has launched a programme to educate the people about this disease through mass media like newspapers etc.? What strategy is being adopted by the Government in this regard?

KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE: Sir, as AIDS is spreading from one country to another, Government of India have taken a number of steps to prevent the import of this disease into this country. We have constituted a task force in 1985, with the Director-General, Indian Council of Medical Research as Chairman. Then, two surveillance centres, namely, at the National Institute of Virology, Pune, and at the Christian Medical College and Hospital, Vellore, were established to screen high-risk people for AIDS. An AIDS cell has been established in the Directorate-General of Health Services to co-ordinate all activities in regard to the control of this disease.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir I wanted to know whether any vaccine has been developed indigenously or in collaboration with other countries.

KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE: We have not developed any vaccine in the country nor do we have any collaboration with any other country.

SHRI D. B. CHANDRE GOWDA: Sir, I am really surprised to see the

way in which the answer has been given. They have said that the number of AIDS cases reported in India is very small. Unfortunately, the hon. Minister has no proper information. Particularly, while giving the details of the AIDS cases all over India, she has forgotten to mention the recent case which has been reported in Karnataka, in Belgaum. A team of doctors was sent there by the Government of Karnataka for investigation and arrangements are being made to shift the patients from Belgaum to Bangalore. Such a vital information is missing.

The Ministry should put in more efforts to find out the real facts. As has been rightly pointed out by the hon. Member, the number of cases reported is more than 145. Unfortunately, the recent case in Karnataka has not come to the notice of the hon. Minister. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Ministry would get the detailed information and place it on the Table of the House. Secondly, the preventive methods suggested in the reply are not adequate.

Then, Sir, some doctors, Indian doctors, have taken lot of pains and have come out with a report in regard to finding a cure for AIDS. Has this come to the notice of the Government and, if so, what is the treatment suggested by them?

KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE: Sir, in Karnataka one AIDS infected person, Devidasi, has been found. She is without clinical manifestation. I would like to repeat the figures to clear the confusion. Upto 31st January, 1988, the total number of persons screened is 79,729. Out of this number 222 cases have been confirmed to have AIDS infection. Out of the 222 confirmed cases 15 are full-blown cases, 8 were Indians, one non-resident and 6 were foreigners. Two were from Maharashtra, one from Andhra Pradesh, two from Punjab, one from Jammu and Kashmir, one from Gujarat and one from U.P. About Karnataka I have already said that one case has been found.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Shri Ram Awadhesh Singh.

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : नहीं पूछना है, क्योंकि आज मैंने इनको कह दिया है कि मैं आपसे नहीं पूछूंगा ।

श्री सभापति : दोस्ती हो गई है ।

श्री राम अवधेश सिंह : इन्होंने वचन लिया था कि आज तंग मत करिएगा । मैंने कहा नहीं पूछूंगे ।

SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to know whether the Government is aware that the National Institute of Virology, Pune, has made inner study of the AIDS disease and it has reported that Tamil Nadu State has had the maximum number of AIDS cases in the country. If so, what are the remedial measures taken by the Government, barring the President's rule? Part (b) of my question, whether the Government is considering the proposal submitted by the National Institute of Virology, Pune, for compulsory usage of condom. If so, how is the Government going to implement this?

KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE: Sir, the Government has prepared a national strategy which has the following components: (1) Establishment and monitoring of surveillance mechanism to cover the entire country to undertake screening of the..

SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH: I have asked a specific question, whether the Government has received a report that Tamil Nadu State has the maximum number of AIDS cases in the country. If, so what are the reasons therefor and what are the remedial measures? Also I would like to know whether there is a proposal for the compul-

y usage of condom and how you are going to implement the same.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have not said about Tamil Nadu. He is asking about Tamil Nadu.

KUMARI SAROJ KHAPARDE: It is known to the Government and we have given instructions relating to that to various States.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA *alias* V. ARUNACHALAM: Sir, the Health Department has detected more cases of AIDS in Tamil Nadu, but that does not mean that this disease is there only in Tamil Nadu. The fact is that other States have totally failed to detect this disease. Our Government has done its best to detect these cases because we are having the best health facilities.

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI MOTI LAL VORA): Sir, I am giving the answer. The first evidence of AIDS infection in the country came from Tamil Nadu in the month of April-May, 1986, when six women prostitutes were found positive for AIDS infection confirmed by Western Block Test and soon AIDS control activities were strengthened. So my friend should not be afraid because I am giving the information to him.

*24. [*The questioner (Shri Rajni Ranjan Sahu) was absent. For answer*, vide col....*infra.*]

Helicopter services to Badrinath and Kedarnath

*25. SHRI RAM CHANDRA VIKAL:†
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to refer to the reply to Starred Question 373 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 2nd December, 1987 and state:

(a) whether Government propose to start helicopters services for Badrinath and Kedarnath shrines for the pilgrims; and

(b) if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI MOTI LAL VORA): (a) and (b) Helicopter services to Badrinath and Kedarnath Shrines, with the present fleet of Dauphin and Westland helicopters in Pawan Hans, are not considered viable.

श्री रामचन्द्र विकल : सभापति महोदय, मंत्री जी ने कहा कि असंभव है वहां पर बद्रीनाथ केदारनाथ तीर्थ-स्थानों पर हेलीकाप्टर का पहुंचाना । मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि हेलीकोप्टर जब छतों पर उतारे जा सकते हैं, पहाड़ में ले जाये जा सकते हैं तो बद्रीनाथ-केदारनाथ ले जाने में क्या दिक्कत है, क्या कठिनाई है ? क्यों वहां के लिए हेलीकोप्टरों की व्यवस्था नहीं की जा सकती ?

श्री मोती लाल वोरा : माननीय सभापति महोदय, माननीय विकल जी ने जो कहा है कि बद्रीनाथ और केदारनाथ पर यह हेलीकोप्टर क्यों नहीं उतारे जा सकते, तो बद्रीनाथ और केदारनाथ की जो ऊंचाइयां हैं, उन पर हेलीकोप्टरों को उतारना संभव नहीं हो सकता और उनकी केपे-

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Ram Chandra Vikal.